

REMARKS

This Amendment is fully responsive to the non-final Office Action dated September 18, 2008, issued in connection with the above-identified application. Claims 1-17 were previously pending in the present application. With this Amendment, claims 3 and 12 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer to the subject matter therein; and claims 1, 2, 4, 7, 8, 10, 11, 13 and 15-17 have been amended. Accordingly, claims 1, 2, 4-11 and 13-17 are all the claims that remain pending in the present application. No new matter has been introduced by the amendments made to the claims. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

To facilitate the Examiner's reconsideration of the present application, the Applicants have provided amendments to the specification and drawings. The changes to the specification and drawings include minor editorial and clarifying changes. Replacement paragraphs are enclosed that reflect the changes made to the original specification. Additionally, a replacement drawing is provided for Figure 15 indicating that the figure is "Prior Art." No new matter has been introduced by the amendments to the specification and drawings.

In the Office Action, claim 1 has been objected to because of minor informalities. The Applicants have amended claim 1 to be consistent with the Examiner's recommendations. Accordingly, withdraw of the objection to claim 1 is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, claims 3-8 and 12-17 have been objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim. However, the Examiner has also indicated that the claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. The Applicants have herein amended independent claims 1 and 10 to incorporate respectively the limitations of claims 3 and 12. Accordingly, withdraw of the objection to claims is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action, claims 1, 2 and 9-11 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Chen et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,764,071, hereafter "Chen"). As noted above, the Applicants have amended independent claims 1 and 10 to incorporate the corresponding limitations of claims 3 and 12. Although additional amendments have been made to the claims, the additional amendments have been made merely to place the claims in better form for US patent practice. These additional amendments have now been made to address any prior art rejection made by the Examiner.

As noted above, independent claims 1 and 10, as amended, include the subject matter of

claims 3 and 12 respectfully. As indicated in the Office Action, both claims 3 and 12 include allowable subject matter. Additionally, claim 3 depends directly from independent claim 1 and claim 12 depends directly from independent claim 10. Therefore, there are no intervening claims. Accordingly, independent claims 1 and 10 should be clearly distinguished from the cited prior art without any additional comments regarding patentability being necessary.

Therefore, independent claims 1 and 10 are not anticipated or rendered obvious by Chen. Likewise, claims 2, 4-9, 11 and 13-17 are also not anticipate or rendered obvious by Chen, at least based upon their respective dependencies from independent claims 1 and 10.

In light of the above, the Applicants respectfully submit that all the pending claims are patentable over the prior art of record. The Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner withdraw the rejections presented in the outstanding Office Action, and pass the present application to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

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